

Sea Condition Rating System – SCRS

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The rating system given below is based on recommendations by Eric Soares of the Tsunami Rangers. The intention is to create a sea condition rating similar to the River Difficulty system which runs from Class-I to Class-VI representing ascending levels of difficulty and danger to the paddler. Factors affecting risks for sea paddling are complex and diverse, but may be evaluated in a methodical fashion achieving a result that describes overall risk in an understandable way.

The group should work together to use the table, gathering data on forecasted weather and sea conditions and agreeing on the score for each factor. When the final rating is ascertained it should be compared against the skill level of the party and the decision should then be made whether to embark that day.

Factor	Risk Factor Description & Scoring Instructions	Max Score	Actual Score
1	Water Temperature: <i>Score one point for each degree below 72F.</i>	40	
2	Wind Speed: <i>Score one point per mph of wind speed.</i>	50+	
3	Wave Height: <i>Score 2 points per vertical foot of wave height.</i>	40+	
4	Swim Distance to Safety: <i>Score 1 point per 100 Meters of swim distance.</i>	20	
5	Breaking Waves: <i>Score 30 points if waves are breaking.</i>	30	
6	Rock Gardens: <i>Score 20 points if paddling in rocks.</i>	20	
7	Sea Caves: <i>Score 20 points if entering sea caves.</i>	20	
8	Night Paddling: <i>Score 20 points if paddling at night.</i>	20	
9	Fog Density: <i>Score up to 20 points if fog is dense.</i>	20	
10	Miscellaneous: <i>Score 10 points or more for other dangers.</i>	10+	
Total Points: <i>Add up all risk factor scores and record total.</i>			
Score Ratio: <i>Divide total danger score by 20 and round to one decimal.</i>			
Class Level: <i>Assign sea class level based on ranges below.</i>			
Class-I	0.0 – 1.9	Class-IV	4.0 – 4.9
Class-II	2.0 – 2.9	Class-V	5.0 – 5.9
Class-III	3.0 – 3.9	Class-VI	6.0 +

Adapted for North Atlantic Canoe and Kayak - NACK by Gordon Dayton – 9/19/05